Suddenly, the range of space habitable by man increased beyond Earth, as the Soviet Union astronaut flew into orbit & the USA followed suit, though their men didn’t go as far. Even terrestrial-bound confines enlarged, as the Director of the Antarctic Division (Mr P G Law), speaking to the RVIA urged architects to apply themselves to the problem of accommodating man & his equipment in the Antarctic. Meanwhile back on the DB, BV, HWS ranch: this is the kind of accommodation that our technological resources are providing for 20thC Australian man. This house is one of about 150 built by Suburban Bldrs Ltd on the Beefacres Estate near Adelaide. The developers have successfully achieved most of the goals that they set themselves: (i) no two copies of a basic home being adjacent, (ii) a mixture of traditional & contemporary styles, (iii) choice of wall, roof-tile materials & trim colours to avoid side-by-side duplication, & with eight basic fence designs (painted or oiled), “it was again possible to break the estate up”. In more ways than one, yes.

Admittedly, the developers have been brave in including slower-selling “contemporary-style” houses in the estate, but they refused to employ architects because the Scale of Fees was not recoverable in terms of design advantages or building economics, so that apart from a more lavish use of glass & generally simpler roof shapes, the “contemporaries” are anaemic derivations of real architects’ work & one sympathizes with the prospective clients who are reluctant to choose them. The real joke on the bldrs is that nothing looks more like “estate development” than an estate which is desperately trying NOT to look like one. Maybe by the time Australia has its own astronaut, estate developers will realize that this sort of subtopian scramble is self-defeating. Anyone for Mars?

This house (12 squares) was designed & built by arch’it Peter Muller for Craftbuilt Homes Pty Ltd at French’s Forest, NSW, & offers a sensitively designed alternative to pseudo-“contemporary or traditional” styles. There is a good sense of space, enclosure & shelter, & the plan can be adapted to suit various internal arrangements. Price: £4,985.

This is another house for which an architect (Ian McKay) was his own bldr, & in this case owner too—16.78 squares of usable floor area costing £5000—at Turrumurra, N.S.W. A simple comparison of these two examples of arch’it’s work (without separately engaged bldrs) with those of estate bldrs (without separately engaged arch’its) provides its own moral.

Subject to the approval of the Dept of Civil Aviation & the Govt Town Planning Dept, Perth City Ccl provisionally approved a proposal by a Perth Company to build a heliport on a parking area on the foreshore west of William St.
Blues Point Tower, in Syd, will be the tallest domestic bldg in the Southern Hemisphere when completed late this yr, 27 floors to a total height of 250 ft. The bldg is almost square, 75 ft by 70 ft, & will contain 168 flats, seven on each of 24 habitable floors. Construction is poured r-c cross walls with 6 inch flat plate floors with external skin of white face bricks. Construction has now reached the 20th floor. (Harry Seidler, arch't; Miller, Millston & Ferris, engrs; Civil & Civic Contractors, bldrs; for the Lend-Lease Corporation).

Syd C Ccl is calling tenders for sale of its land in Martin Place, in the "New York Times" & British newspapers. Tenders close on July 3, & there is a deposit of £5,000. Bldg height on the site will be limited to 252 ft—the ht of the new Reserve Bank bldg being built on the opposite side of Martin Place. Last year an offer of £1,400,000 by the E Alec Colman group of companies, London, was refused by the council because they would not agree to the group building a 40 storey bldg & the giving of vacant possession of the land.

On a 100 acre site in East Coburg (Vic) Kodak (Aust) Pty Ltd have just completed new air-conditioned bldgs at a cost of £5 m. Further extensions are contemplated for an additional £3 m, including a multi-storey admin bldg—which may give cohesion to a layout which at the moment is, for a company such as Kodak, remarkably unphotogenic to the passer-by. (H A & F L Norris & Associates, arch'ts; Garlich & Stewart, cons civil engrs; Lobley Treidel & Ptnrs, cons mech engrs; C Wolfestan & Ptnrs, quantity surveyors).

R & B Constructions of Lismore NSW have been awarded the contract for construction of a £108,000 dormitory block at the Univ of New England, Armidale. The new block, planned around a courtyard, is the second of three similar blocks to house 200 students on completion. The scheme has been designed with a good sense of scale & function by the NSW Govt Arch't. (W. dwgs prepared by McConnell, Smith & Johnson).

In case anybody thought that Melb’s city underground railway scheme has been forgotten, the Minister for Transport, Sir Arthur Warner, announced that the Mines Dept are commencing test bores. Actual construction is envisaged for 1967-72.

Melb C Ccl approved a plan to spend £10,000 on a scheme to develop Lincoln Square, Carlton, with lawns, trees, paths & fountains. To do this the existing Moreton Bay fig trees will be removed. One councillor objected to spending the money on a square which was used only at lunch time by factory employees—it was, he claimed “like putting a lingerie shop in the Arctic Ocean”.

The ragged, messy form of the bldg is a sad contrast to the form of a ship alongside: it’s complex, won but (on the whole) an ordered & satisfying one: the terminal could, perhaps thru simplicity, have played up to the ships’ form. As it is the bldg just appears ridiculous by contrast.
All members of the National Capital planning committee have been reappointed by the Government for a second term of 3 yrs. The first committee was appointed in 1958 to advise on the development of Canberra. The re-appointed members are Mr J W Overall (Canberra), chairman; Dr F Ledger (Vic) & Mr G Walkley (SA), of the Aust Planning Institute; Prof H I Ashworth (NSW) & Mr W P R Godfrey (Vic), of the RAIA; Mr R A Pridde (NSW) & Mr M J Lee (Vic), of the Institution of Engrs, Aust.

The former Dean of the Faculty of Arch at Syd Univ (Emeritus Prof Leslie Wilkinson) has been awarded the RAIA Gold Medal.

West Germany will have a new pavilion built (in prestressed conc) for the Syd Trade Fair at the Royal Agric Society Showgrounds, August 1961. (Trenchard Smith & Morgan, arch'ts; Monier Pty Ltd, bldrs.)

At a forum held in Melb by the Vic Branch of the Economic Society of Aust & NZ, the Vic Minister for Housing (Mr Petty) suggested that housing finance should be arranged on a national basis, perhaps linked with the central banking system, similar to the Federal Housing Administration in the USA. He also deplored the use of statistics to illustrate that the housing position in Aust was being adequately catered for, when it was obvious that many individual cases of hardship were known to exist. Looking into the future, Melb bldr A V Jennings hoped to see national uniform plumbing regulations, a Federal housing policy under direction of the Department of National Development, expected working hours to drop to 36 a week, & bricks to remain the best material for external walls.

Conventional materials (red brick, tiled roof) & conventional construction (hole-in-wall windows) are given fresh & unconventional impact in this block of home units at Artarmon, N.S.W. Many observers will no doubt find the effect too brutal, but at least this bldg asserts its merits openly, & proves that to be "contemporary" it is not necessary to resort to collecting current arch't gimmicks from glossy overseas magazines. The bldg contains 5 flats, cost $18,800 & is actually an addition to an ex'g house (two storey red brick & tile), in a suburb of similar character. (McConnell, Smith & Johnson, arch'ts; Girvan Bros Pty Ltd, bldrs.)

The Austin Company, world-wide engineering & construction firm (which already maintains complete design, engineering, estimating & construction staffs in Argentina, Brazil, Canada, England, France & USA) & A J Anderson (Aust) Pty Ltd have announced the establishment of Austin-Anderson (Aust) Pty Ltd, with headquarters in Syd, to perform complete engineering & construction work & related consulting services throughout Aust.

Mr C A Hammerschmidt, a senior lecturer at the School of Arch, Univ of Melb has been appointed to a UNESCO post of Professor of Arch Design at the Middle East Technological Univ, Turkey.

The Fitzroy Gardens, Melb, is to have a new $40,000 restaurant built to replace the existing 80 yrs old kiosk. The Melb "Herald" ran a full page spread in which it compared Melb's effort unfavourably with Adelaide's Torrens Lake Weir restaurant (see C-S No 103). It is welcome news when the daily press supports good contemporary architecture such as this, though it was a pity that the arch'ts of the Torrens restaurant were not named. They were of course Messrs Hassell & McConnell, Adelaide.

This is the new city terminal for TAA in Hobart, the first in Aust designed specifically for the company. The glass wall of the lounge has been designed to withstand winds of 90 m.p.h., & generally details are well-considered, inside & outside, except for the crudely proportioned windows in the brick "Fly TAA" wall. (H A & F L Norris & Associates, arch'ts; E A Watts Pty Ltd, bldrs.)

Two staff members of Univ of Q'land, Mr R Sheridan (senior lecturer in mech eng), & Mr M Juppenplats (senior lecturer in arch) have designed a prefab solar house which will use the sun's power to provide air-conditioning, hot water service & cooling facilities. Heat from the sun will be collected in water tubes in the roof & the heat used to drive a refrigerator or remain stored in a special tank at 450°. Design rights are owned by the Univ & private firms will be licensed to build the houses, which are expected to cost 10 to 15 per cent more than conventional timber house of similar area. A model house is being built for tests on the roof of the biological sciences bldg at St Lucia.

One large flat per floor is one way of ensuring a separate entrance to each unit in multi-storey blocks, & this is the proposed lay-out for a 10 storey block of flats to be built in Rosemont Ave, Edgecliff NSW. Each flat will occupy 22 squares & contain 4 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, living rm, dining rm, summ, utility rm, kitchen & entrance hall. (A M Bolot, arch't; Stanley, Llewellyn & Whitten, engrs; S M Scott Pty Ltd, managing agents).

The new Port Kembla branch of the A & NZ Bank gets daylight along the entire depth of the bldg thru an 18 ft high glass wall which faces on to a 60 ft long by 11 ft wide garden court, landscaped with pebbles, shrubs, & a fountain pool. Worth noting that even a traditionally staid type of institution such as a bank is prepared to leave part of its site clear of bldgs to gain advantage of natural light & allow its customers some arch't delight. (Bunning & Madden, arch'ts; Hughes Bros Pty Ltd, bldrs; Crooks, Michell & Peacock, consulting engrs).
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